

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Herein amended) A method for identifying a compound that improves treatment of wounds to skin or ~~another external body surfaces~~ in a diabetic animal, the method comprising:

- a) producing a wound in the skin or ~~another external body surface~~ of the diabetic animal;
- b) permitting the wound to heal in <sup>both</sup> the presence <sup>+ the</sup> or absence of a test compound, ~~or treating the wound with a test compound;~~
- c) comparing wound healing in the presence of the compound to wound healing in the absence of the compound; and
- d) <sup>selecting</sup> ~~identifying the~~ a compound that improves treatment of wounds to skin or another external body surfaces in the animal if the wound ~~heals more rapidly, more completely or less painfully in the presence of the compound than in the absence of the compound~~ contracts more in a shorter period of time when treated in the presence of a test compound than when the wound is treated in the absence of the test compound.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of:

- e) comparing wound healing in the presence of the test compound with wound healing in the presence of an aldose reductase inhibitor, wherein the test compound is identified as a compound that improves treatment of wounds to skin or another external body surfaces in an animal if the wound heals at least as rapidly, completely or less painfully in the presence of the compound as in the presence of the aldose reductase inhibitor.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the animal is a mammal.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the animal is a human.

5. (Canceled) ~~The method of Claim 1, wherein the human is a diabetic.~~

6. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the wound is to skin on an animal.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the wound is produced by punch biopsy.

8. (Withdrawn)

9. (Withdrawn)

10. (Withdrawn)

11. (Withdrawn)

12. (Withdrawn)

13. (Herein amended) A method for identifying a compound that improves diabetic neuropathy or neurological disorders associated with diabetes, the method comprising:

- a) producing a wound in the skin or another external body surface of a diabetic animal;
- b) permitting the wound to heal in the presence or in the absence of a test compound, ~~or treating the wound with a test compound;~~
- c) comparing wound healing in the presence of the compound to wound healing in the absence of the compound; and
- d) identifying ~~the a~~ compound that improves diabetic neuropathy or neurological disorders associated with diabetes if the wound ~~heals more rapidly, more completely or less painfully in the presence of the compound than in the absence of the compound.~~ contracts more in a shorter period of time when treated in the presence of a test compound than when the wound is treated in the absence of the test compound.

14. (Original) The method of Claim 13, further comprising:

- e) comparing wound healing in the presence of the test compound with wound healing in the presence of an aldose reductase inhibitor, wherein the test compound is identified as a compound that improves diabetic neuropathy or neurological disorders associated with diabetes if the wound heals at least as rapidly, completely or less painfully in the presence of the compound as in the presence of the aldose reductase inhibitor.

15. (Original) The method of Claim 13, wherein the animal is a mammal.
16. (Original) The method of Claim 13, wherein the animal is a human.
17. (Canceled) ~~The method of Claim 13, wherein the human is a diabetic.~~
18. (Original) The method of Claim 13, wherein the wound is to skin on an animal.
19. (Original) The method of Claim 13, wherein the wound is produced by punch biopsy.
20. (Withdrawn)
21. (Withdrawn)
22. (Withdrawn)
23. (Withdrawn)
24. (Withdrawn)
25. (Original) The method of Claim 2, wherein the animal is a mammal.
26. (Original) The method of Claim 2, wherein the animal is a human.
27. (Canceled) ~~The method of Claim 2, wherein the human is a diabetic.~~
28. (Original) The method of Claim 2, wherein the wound is to skin on an animal.
29. (Original) The method of Claim 2, wherein the wound is produced by punch biopsy.
30. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein the animal is a mammal.
31. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein the animal is a human.
32. (Canceled) ~~The method of Claim 14, wherein the human is a diabetic.~~
33. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein the wound is to skin on an animal.
34. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein the wound is produced by punch biopsy.